LETTERS

ON THE

SUBJECT OF UNION,

ADDRESSED TO

MESSRS. SAURIN AND JEBB,

IN WHICH

MR. JEBB'S "*REPLY*" IS CONSIDERED.

BY A BARRISTER.

Est iniqua in omni re accusandâ, prætermissis bonis, malorum enumeratio, vitiorumque selectio: ego enim fateor inesse quiddam mali; sed bonum quod est quæsitum, sine isto malo non haberemus.—

CICERO, DE LEGIBUS.

—DUBLIN:—

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1799.

require to be reminded, that political diſcuſſion is very unſuitable employment for a ſoldier; that armed bodies cannot deliberate on affairs of State, compatibly with the tenor of their duties, or the ends of their inſtitution. When they feel their obedience to the Executive to be treaſon to the Conſtitution, let them lay down their arms, (as happened in the reign of James the Second) but let them not in the mean time convert a Military Aſſociation into a deliberative Aſſembly. It was not, during the moſt flouriſhing or happy periods of the Roman Power, that her Emperors owed their promotion to the deliberations and ſuffrages of her Prætorian Bands; and, as for our parts, (I ſpeak of us deſcendants from Engliſh ſettlers) we are too far removed from our Saxon progenitors—too far entangled in the complicated and lulling habits of peaceful refinement, to attempt reviving their martial cuſtoms, and expreſs our ſentiments of public meaſures by the claſhing of our ſwords.

Theſe are principles too obvious for you to require information upon; and I am confident that neither you, nor the reſpectable Corps which you command, (and to which I too have the honor of belonging) will ever loſe ſight of them, or ſet the dangerous example of deviation from them to the other Corps of Yeomanry throughout the kingdom.

I addreſs

I addreſs you merely as a Lawyer; and honeſt, as I believe you are, and poſſeſſing, as you ſeem to me to do, one of the ſoundeſt and cleareſt unadorned intellects that has ever yet fallen within my obſervation, ſupported by an enviable calm of temper and diſpoſition, you will ſurely give me a patient and attentive hearing.

The preſent queſtion is probably the moſt momentous that has ever yet been ſubmitted to the diſcuſſion of Iriſhmen; and ſo material is it that the ſubject ſhould be coolly and fully inveſtigated through all its topics, that I hold the man to be warranted who comes forward as I do, (without waiting to have completely made up his own mind upon the WHOLE of the ſubject) to expoſe to the public eye the progreſſive and unfiniſhed operations of his underſtanding, and avow the reſult of each partial inveſtigation, whether that reſult has been doubt or conviction.

In doing thus, I may ſupply my countrymen with materials, on which ſome abler mind will operate with more effect, and convert them to better purpoſe than I have had the ſkill to do. I may happen to hint that which my reader had overlooked, yet which, when ſeen, he can purſue to an extent that I could not pretend to reach: where in ſtating the *pour* and *contre*, I ſhall eſtimate oppoſite arguments as of equal weight, a more

more juſt and accurate underſtanding may diſcern preponderancy on one ſide, and thus while I am but communicating my own doubts, I may be helping others to a deciſion.

But though I were able to do no more (and ſelf-love will not permit me to wiſh for greater ſucceſs) than excite in others the ſame fluctuation and uncertainty which a ballancing of reaſons had produced in me, it will not follow that I ſhould do no ſervice to thoſe that hear me. Uncertainty is in many caſes a more eligible ſtate of mind than our pride and ignorance, the parents of our precipitation, will allow us to admit. He who chuſes to weigh the arguments before he decides the queſtion, is not a weaker man than him who decides without examination; yet the period of examination will be a period of doubt, and the duration of this period will bear ſome proportion to the complication of the queſtion, and to the number of the arguments which it ſupplies. But this interval of uncertainty it has been my lot to find ſcorned by the promptitude and ſublimity of many of thoſe geniuſes with whom I have converſed on the ſubject of Union.

Men are not zealous (ſtill leſs are they violent) in ſupporting an opinion the truth of which they doubt. We do not venture to ſtamp and rant, where we are not ſure that we are ſtanding on

firm

firm ground. Now, as a violent ſupport of either ſide of the preſent queſtion does not ſeem calculated to promote the happineſs or tranquility of our country, that man is perhaps ſomething more than juſtified, who would excite doubts, for the purpoſe of appeaſing violence.

Whether Government has any deſign of entrapping the country, of firſt enticing them into an admiſſion of the principle of an Union, and of then perverting this acquieſcence into an obſtacle to their *effectually* oppoſing every *diſadvantageous kind* of Union, is a queſtion which I ſhall conſider hereafter, as well as the beſt means of defeating ſo miſchievous a deſign: At preſent, I can hardly conceive ſuch an intention to exiſt. I reſt my doubts not on that implicit confidence in the candour of Adminiſtrations, which however compoſed, I am not inclined to place in them—nor on that opinion of their profound wiſdom, which I have not been uſed to entertain, but on the *manifeſt* imprudence and vanity of ſuch a deſign: on my intimate perſuaſion that no Union, *unfairly* conducted, can in the preſent ſtate of things, be *peaceably* or ſecurely atchieved. In ſhort, I found myſelf on that, which whether in the caſe of individuals or claſſes, experience has taught me to be the ſureſt baſis—the ſelfiſh regard which Adminiſtration will have for thoſe intereſts which are too obvious for them to miſtake.

Aſſuming

Aſſuming then, (upon thoſe grounds which I have juſt been ſtating) that no ſuch illiberal intention is harboured, I proceed to alledge that oppoſition to an Union is, in the preſent ſtage of the queſtion, premature on the part of every man but him who is prepared to aſſert "*that no ſcheme of Union can be deviſed, which will not be injurious to this Country.*"

Such as make this maxim their foundation, have preſent grounds for oppoſing an Union; but oppoſition is untimely on the part of thoſe, who (with me) refuſe to adopt a principle ſo comprehenſive.

I have heard Gentlemen inveigh with becoming patriotiſm againſt ſchemes which went to *extinguiſh* Ireland; but after liſtening to ſuch invectives, I have felt inclined to enquire what they had to do with the queſtion before us?—I muſt be woefully deſtitute of grounds for my conduct or opinions, before I would conſent to reſt them on a metaphor. Figurative language ſometimes illuſtrates, and very frequently deludes; and if we muſt analyſe the froth of paſſion or declamation, in ſearch of that rational ſpirit, which it is vapid except ſo far as it contains, I ſhould ſay, that the terms *extinction* and *incorporation* preſent moſt diſſimilar ideas to my mind.

To aboliſh the Legiſlature, and annul the Juriſprudence of our country, to atchieve (for example) the objects of the late Rebellion, this would indeed be to extinguiſh Ireland; and thoſe who, by an intemperate and turbulent oppoſition to the name of Union, are perhaps contributing to throw the nation into new convulſions, would do well to conſider whether they may not be producing that extinction, which they are in ſuch a hurry to deplore.

But, preſerving the ſovereign power of Ireland, to transfer it (not *politically*, but *locally*) to England, merely to change the ſeat of its exerciſe, and, if I may ſo expreſs myſelf, the center of its energy; to transfer it, not impaired, but only modified in that degree which the transfer renders inevitable, this will not be to extinguiſh Ireland. Stating matters *in the abſtract*, the Legiſlative incorporation of the Britannick Iſlands might as truly be called the extinction of one, as of the other. It does not *leſſen* the independence of either country; but only renders the term *independent* inapplicable; it being a term expreſſive of relation, and all political relations having ceaſed, when the two countries have coaleſced, and become one. Such a conſolidation would annul, without diminiſhing, the independence of Ireland: It would only annul, by identifying it with the independence of Great Britain.

As

As my object is to argue, and not to debate, I wish to be precisely understood. I would therefore explain my meaning in some expressions which I have used.

I have spoken of the Legislative change which an Union might produce, as a transfer of the Sovereign power of Ireland "*unimpaired.*" On this expression I would, by way of comment, make the following observations:

1st, That to alter is not, *ex vi termini*, to subvert, nor even to impair: a position which, if acquiesced in, (as it must be, unless we are prepared to insist that to restore a diseased man to health would be to impair or subvert his Constitution,) would furnish an answer to much that I lately heard you urge, when placed in a situation, in which my respect for you makes me hope I shall never see you again.

2dly, That the same *alteration* in the frame of the Irish Legislative, which under some circumstances would be a subversion of the Constitution, might under others, not be even an impairing of it. For instance, every reader of common sense must perceive, what I should much transgress the proper limits of a letter if I were to attempt to prove, viz: That though, if there were no Union, it would be a manifest *subversion* of our Constitution

Conſtitution, to reduce the number of our Legiſlative Chambers, (ſay of our Houſe of Lords to 40, and of our Commons to 100,) yet it will not follow that this abridgement, *making a part of the ſcheme of Union*, even tends to *impair* the Conſtitution;—For,

3dly, I cannot ſee that conferring upon *one* Imperial Legiſlative Corporation, of King, Lords, and Commons, the right of legiſlating for *the whole Empire*, (of courſe including Ireland) will in the eye of a philoſopher be any impairing of the Iriſh Conſtitution, provided there be infuſed into that body of Law-givers a portion of Iriſh influence, adequate to the effectual protection of Iriſh intereſts. Therefore, the exchange which a *juſt and equitable* ſcheme of Union propoſes, would be a ſurrender rather of the *means* than the *ends* of the Iriſh Conſtitution; and a ſurrender, compenſated by the acquiſition of other means, equally calculated for the attainment of thoſe ends.

4thly, The ſubordinate (and ſtill purchaſed and compenſated) ſurrender of *ſuch* inferior branches of political power as are incidental to the *diſtinctneſs* of our Legiſlature is one, the propriety of which need not be diſcuſſed ſeparately, being involved in that of the *main* ſurrender.

That the Siſter Countries form but one Empire will not be denied; and that it is deſirable that *one* Empire ſhould be governed by *one* Legiſlature, is a propoſition, which at leaſt is not on the face of it, abſurd.

The very appellation of ſiſter countries involved an allegory, which by recommending cordial unanimity, was meant to correct the miſchievous tendencies of diſtinctneſs and ſeparation; and which ſuggeſts an argument for Union, not ſo weak, as it may be vague and undefined.

Had the original Conſtitution of the Britiſh Empire given to each of the kingdoms which compoſe it that Conſtitution, which an Union, *formed on juſt principles*, would now confer, would any one of thoſe conſtituent kingdoms have been juſtified in complaining? Would one of them have been, (even theoretically,) leſs free or happy, than diſunited Ireland (alas! in many ſenſes diſunited!) is at preſent? Could Ireland have *originally*, on the ground of political juſtice, demanded more, (to purſue a hint, which I have met with in an argumentative, but ſurely in ſome parts objectionable pamphlet, which I have lately read,) than that, like Yorkſhire, ſhe ſhould have an adequate ſhare in the imperial government, and repreſentation? If not, then will ſhe now impair her Conſtitution, by ſurrendering

dering it, (or rather its preſent diſtinctneſs,) in conſideration of obtaining all, that in political juſtice ſhe could ever have demanded? Surely not, unleſs her preſent Conſtitution be ſomething inconſiſtent with the principles of political juſtice.

Let it be recollected that I am not inveſtigating the merits of this or that ſcheme of Union. I am only enquiring whether Union in the abſtract (that is, every Union) muſt be bad. And I do confeſs, that I can feel no more extacy or abhorrence, in contemplating the abſtract idea of an Union, than I could do in contemplating the abſtract idea of a ſquare or a triangle.

Having thus diſclaimed all extacy from the contemplation of this metaphyſical exiſtence—Union, it follows that I muſt be as averſe from violent approbation, as from violent oppoſition. I am not ſo far gone in political chivalry, as to call upon my readers to acknowledge the tranſcendant beauty of what neither of us have ever ſeen. Union, *in the abſtract*, I look on to be neither good nor bad, except ſo far as *one* Legiſlature may be deſirable for *one* Empire; and as removing the ſeat of power MAY be (I do not ſay will be) a corrective of party animoſities which rage here at preſent; and even theſe theoretic and abſtract advantages, I feel *may* be balanced, if not outweighed, by oppoſite inconveniences.

But

But having qualified the aſſertion as above, I would aſſert that Union in the abſtract is a thing *indifferent*, and becomes good, or bad, according to the kind of Union that it is, and to the circumſtances under which it is obtained.

I therefore confeſs, that whenever the queſtion of Union ſhall become a ſubject for legiſlative diſcuſſion, I wiſh it may be ſo contrived as that we ſhall not be called on to worſhip or renounce a mere abſtract exiſtence, which cannot be a proper object for either devotion or invective; but, in the language of the Droll who remonſtrated with the Knight of la Mancha, I ſhould require to behold this Dulcinea of Adminiſtration, before I acknowledged its ſupreme beauty.

If you ſhould be curious to know the writer of this letter, I ſhall gratify this curioſity, ſo far as is conſiſtent with the incognito which I wiſh to preſerve, by informing you that I am a man who has no connection with the Government, and who, *at the leaſt*, owes them no obligation: that I am a perſon whoſe ambitious views, *valeant quantum*, an Union muſt obſtruct: that I am a Member of Parliament, and

A BARRISTER.

LETTER

LETTER II.

TO *WILLIAM SAURIN*, ESQ.

SIR,

PERHAPS I err in conceiving you not only to have narrowed the grounds of your oppoſition to an Union, but to have taken new grounds, diſtinct from, if not inconſiſtent with your former. When ſome days ago I had the honour of hearing you declare your ſentiments on this important Queſtion to the Lawyers' Corps, I found you ſoaring beyond all ſuch ſubordinate conſiderations as the expediency of agitating the ſubject in the preſent ſtate of the kingdom: you then oppoſed an Union on the more *permanent* and inflexible principle of its being a radically unconſtitutional meaſure; and therefore ſuch as no Yeoman could ſupport without violating that oath which he had taken under the proviſions of a late Act of Parliament. In order to demonſtrate that an Union was a meaſure directly ſubverſive of the Conſtitution, I (and others) recollect that you put this as a parrallel and illuſtrative caſe and queſtion: "Suppoſe," ſaid you, "that it ſhould pleaſe the Government to make an arrangement by which Money Bills, inſtead of originating from the Commons, ſhould originate from the Crown,

Crown, could any man deny that this was an infringement of the Conſtitution, or could Yeomen, conſiſtently with their oaths, lend their ſupport to ſuch innovation?"

From the tenor of your motion at the Bar Meeting held this day, I infer that you have deſerted this ground of eternal oppoſition, and are content to ſet up a temporary bar to the ſcheme of Union.

The import of the Reſolution which was this day carried, by a large majority, was, that *the Union would be an innovation upon the Conſtitution of Ireland; and that bringing forward ſuch a queſtion in the preſent ſtate of the kingdom, would be highly imprudent and dangerous.*

Reſpecting you as I do, I am mortified to find myſelf obliged to differ from you ſo widely as I do on the preſent queſtion; nay more, at finding that by changing your ground, as you have done, you have encreaſed the interval which there was between our opinions: I thought your former judgment premature;—but I think your latter wrong.

Conceiving an undefined Union to be a thing indifferent, I ſhould have withheld my approbation, and thought you ought to have withheld your

your cenſure, until the ſame rumour which had ſtated that an Union was projected, ſhould have deſcribed to us what its outline and foundations were.—But when, ſhifting your poſition, you object to the meaſure as untimely, I feel compelled to differ more completely from you.

To me it ſeems that no better period for alteration can be choſen, than one in which heavy and recent calamities, traceable to the now ſubſiſting ſtate of things, have furniſhed grounds for doubting whether the ſtability of our preſent ſituation would at all conduce to the proſperity of our country.

To thoſe who, if the alternative of Union or Separation were propoſed, would prefer the former, it may ſeem that the late aſpect of Iriſh affairs, and the detected plans and objects of our principal conſpirators, have gone no ſmall way towards thus limiting our choice, and ſtinting us to an election between Union and Separation.

Such an alternative can never be ſo plain as *demonſtrably* to exiſt: the moſt that can be ſeen is that which I already fancy myſelf to diſcern, viz. ſuch a ſtate of things as renders it *probable* that the preſent degree of connection cannot long endure; but, that if the bonds which unite the Siſter Countries be not ſtrengthened, they will be broken.

The attempt to diſſolve our *preſent* connection with England might in different ways be deplorably ſucceſsful. From being the Siſter Country of Great Britain, the Separatiſts might ſucceed in degrading us to the ſtate of her conquered province, and thus indeed atchieve ſuch an Union as would annihilate our Conſtitution; or they might hand us over to the ſtifling embrace of France, which would receive us with open arms, and hug us moſt fraternally to death; but of this I am perſuaded, that to diſſolve our preſent connection with our glorious naval ally and protector, would not be to promote our independence.

Therefore I ſhould agree with thoſe who prefer Union to attempted Separation: I ſhould concur with thoſe who conceived that where we could (though dimly) diſcern ſuch an alternative before us, we ſhould do well to reduce our choice to practice, and moor ourſelves in time; and if I thought the preſent were ſuch a moment, I ſhould infer that Union was not now an untimely queſtion.

Untimely in the preſent ſtate of the kingdom!—In what ſtate of things would the diſcuſſion be opportune? when we have but juſt emerged from a cruel and deſolating Rebellion, into which long-gathering animoſities and diſcontents at length

length burſt forth, it is deemed moſt *untimely*, and imprudent, to propoſe any change of that regime, if not from which, at leaſt during which, thoſe bloody conſequences flowed! Shall we ſurrender a *diſtinctneſs*, which is found ſo valuably productive, and tranſplant to England what may there ceaſe to produce thoſe fruits of blood, and bigotry, and civil rage, on which we have been lately permitted to revel here?

Were the preſent ſtate of the kingdom the reverſe of what it is, had Ireland, advancing along the paths of induſtry and peace, undiſturbed by civil or religious diſcord, now attained that proſperity, which I truſt ſtill awaits her, would this be the proper period for propoſing an Union?—Could the Miniſter gravely tell the Parliament, or the People, *that their ſituation being manifeſtly proſperous and happy in a high degree, he thought they could not do better than immediately alter and correct that Conſtitution, under which their proſperity and happineſs had grown?*

If indeed the feeling of the maſs of the nation (I mean of the thinking part of the nation,) be found to be againſt an Union, the meaſure ought then to be abandoned, as untimely: but how has this feeling been yet collected or announced? or do the Bar claim to be endowed with a ſpirit of divination? It is plain too, from the tenor of the

Reſolution, that this is not the ground, on which the meaſure is aſſerted to be untimely: it is announced to be inopportune, not becauſe repugnant to the feelings of the nation, but on account *of the preſent ſtate* of the kingdom; that is to ſay, in my opinion, a State, furniſhing arguments rather for, than againſt, the expediency of the meaſure.

I cannot avoid entertaining ſome diſlike for thoſe dexterous reſolutions, which are obſcure, vague, or equivocal in their mode of expreſſion, and which branch out into ſuch (connected) propoſitions as will allure as many ſupporters as may be. They ſeem to me to be calculated to delude the public, by an appearance of more unanimity than really exiſts.

The Reſolution carried to day deſcribes Union to be an innovation upon the Conſtitution. This charge appears to me to be either deſtitute of applicable meaning, or not conſiſtent with truth.

That Union is Conſtitutional innovation, if by this be meant that it is a novel and important change in the mode and form (rather than ſubſtance) of our Conſtitution, is very true, and very obvious; too obvious to need being atteſted by a Reſolution of the Bar; and in no way that I ſee, material as a foundation for inference.

But

But if, under the aſſertion, it be inſinuated that Union in the abſtract (for of none other, 'till the terms are diſcloſed, can we ſpeak,) is a meaſure ſubverſive of the Conſtitution, the poſition, in my mind, becomes at once inſidious and untrue. Untrue, becauſe I deny that no Union can be deviſed which will leave the Iriſh Conſtitution unſubverted; (and in my laſt letter I have endeavoured to juſtify this denial,) inſidious, becauſe it indirectly hints that *permanent* objection to Union *in its principle*, which the latter branch of the Reſolution evades, and aſſumes the ſhape of mere objection to the *expediency* of diſcuſſing the meaſure *at the preſent time*.

I have heard moſt patriotic denunciations againſt thoſe who would ſink their Country to a Province; and zealous promiſes againſt concurring with the Traitors who would ſo degrade her. But theſe ſallies have ſeemed to me to be ſo much very good paſſion thrown away; for it remains to be proved that a Union with Great Britain would ſink Ireland to a Province.

Subordinate ebullitions have impreſſed me in the ſame way; (for I find the declaimers againſt this abſtraction, have a little phial of wrath, ready to pour forth upon every detail into which the diſcuſſion can be divided.)

Thus

Thus, when I am told that, if an Union ſhall take place, our Benches will be filled with Engliſh Judges, I aſk myſelf whether the political Seer to whom I am liſtening has inherited the ſecond ſight of Lord Belhaven, or the other Scotch opponents of an Union? For my part, having no prophetic viſion of the terms of Union, I am ſaved the ſhock of foreſeeing this Judicial importation.

But, Sir, you are of opinion that the Iriſh Parliament is not competent to ordain an Union: that its authority is limited by the Conſtitution; and that, in enacting Union, the Houſe of Commons would tranſgreſs the boundaries of its delegated power, and all the branches of the Legiſlature exerciſe an *exorbitant* authority.

That the authority of Parliament is an authority *within* the Conſtitution is very obvious; for it is an authority *derived from* the Conſtitution. Parliament therefore cannot ſubvert the Conſtitution; for this would be to cancel their own title, and deſtroy the ſource of their authority.

But when has it been conceded that Union is ſubverſive of the Conſtitution? If it be not, then the objection to the competence of Parliament fails. On the other hand if it *be* ſubverſive of the Conſtitution, we need not diſcuſs the limits of Parliamentary

Parliamentary authority, but at once reject the meaſure on this very ſufficient ground, that it would be deſtructive of *what* we are bound and intereſted to preſerve.

A few words more on the competence of Parliament.—I freely admit that, in enacting an Union, they would exerciſe very extraordinary and unuſual powers; and whether or not exorbitant in point of theory, might I think be fairly argued. In favour of their authority, the Scotch Union, and perhaps the Act by which the Parliament prolonged the period of its own duration, might in the way of *precedent* be alledged; and in ſupport of their power *on principle* it might be ſaid, that, in ordaining an Union, they were meddling leſs with the *ends*, than with the *means*, of the Conſtitution; and though they were ſettling its forms, and even its outworks, were leaving its ſubſtance untouched, or at leaſt its ſpirit unimpaired.

But permit me to conſider this part of the ſubject in another point of view; and aſk might not Union under ſome poſſible circumſtances be eligible? And how more conſtitutionally than through the intervention of Parliament could it be brought about? Should not the meaſure flow from the will of the people? and is not Parliament the Conſtitutional organ for uttering that will? Would not their unforced acquieſcence adopt

adopt and ratify the meaſure of their Parliament? Would it be leſs Conſtitutional thus conſtructively to legalize ſuch a proceeding, than it would be to diſſolve the Parliament, and call upon the people to do that which the Conſtitution had never empowered them to do, viz. to elect Deputies for the particular and excluſive purpoſe of enacting this meaſure? or, finally, would you appoint tribunes, and convoke the people by tribes and centuries to vote an union? I have written this letter haſtily: It probably will be found to bear the marks of precipitation: I wiſh that ſimilar traces may not be found in more important acts of the preſent day.

I have the honour to be, &c.

A BARRISTER.

LETTER

LETTER III.

TO *WILLIAM SAURIN*, ESQ.

SIR,

IT gives me pleaſure to think that, as I proceed in my rather deſultory examination of that great Queſtion, of which every Iriſhman is full, I approach topics, where the difference of opinion between you and me, which has hitherto been ſo wide, may at leaſt decreaſe. I aſſure you, without compliment, that, in a caſe of doubt, I ſhould conſider your diſſent to be a ſtrong argument againſt the truth of any opinion.

At another time I ſhall take the liberty of ſubmitting to you ſome farther and fuller diſcuſſion than is to be met with in my laſt, of the competence of Parliament to bind this country to an Union. For the preſent I would only propoſe this queſtion, viz. Whether you hold Parliament to be leſs competent to enact *Union*, than *Reform*?

I cannot figure to myſelf any plan of what is termed Radical Reform, which would not inevitably go to the abolition, or abridgement, of preſent individual and corporate franchiſes; and I fancy myſelf to diſcern as many theoretical objections

objections to the competence of Repreſentatives to *reform away* the privileges of thoſe who have returned them, and cancel thoſe very conſtituent franchiſes from which their own authority has flowed, as can be raiſed againſt their competence to vote an Union. Yet I doubt whether thoſe who ſeem in the preſent caſe ſuch ſtrict definers of Parliamentary Authority, would with equal parſimony deal out to the National Repreſentative that power, which was to be employed in producing *radical reform*; I ſuſpect we ſhould find thoſe political miſers, like Naſidienus, *veteris non parcos aceti*; no niggards of the ſour produce of popular fermentation; the eſtabliſhed pickle and preſervative of tumult and diſaffection! I even doubt whether *innovation*, aſſuming the aſpect of Reform, though it were to tear up the ancient land-marks of the Conſtitution, would in ſome minds excite an equal panic, with that which it has ſtruck into our learned Body, when appearing in the leſs hoſtile character of Union.

But to proceed to the main ſubject of this Letter.

I profeſs myſelf unable completely to underſtand their meaning, who (with the Author of the Arguments for and againſt an Union) call upon us "to diſcuſs the principle of Union" in the abſtract; and aſſert that, "until we have done this, it

it is uſeleſs to enter into the details :" (p. 56.)— If to diſcuſs the principle be only to enquire what it is, the diſcuſſion is ſoon concluded, and I, for my part, am quite prepared to accompany the author into his details. The principle of an Union I pronounce to be neither more nor leſs than this, the uniting of perſons or things which had been diſtinct. But if to diſcuſs the principle, means to pronounce whether Union in the abſtract be a benefit, or a miſchief, to the thing united, I conſider the call for ſuch diſcuſſion, if it be not inſidious, to be abſurd.—Union in the abſtract "*cannot be ill; cannot be good;*" and I diſapprove "*this ſupernatural ſoliciting*" of us to aſcertain the degree in which it poſſeſſes qualities, which it is incompatible with its nature to poſſeſs at all. If I were aſked whether an Union with England would be advantageous to this country, and were to anſwer the queſtion in French, I ſhould ſay, *ce'ſt ſelon.* If you were a ſingle man, and that it was propoſed to you to marry Titia, you would be apt to enquire her age, her character, her accompliſhments, perhaps her portion; you might aſk what jointure ſhe would require; nay, you might not be ſo indifferent as to her appearance, as not to demand a ſight of the lady, or at leaſt of her picture; and I beg leave to conjecture that you would conſider that perſon to hold very ſtrange language, who aſſured you that theſe were mere details, which

ought to be poſtponed until you had diſcuſſed the *principle* of this matrimonial union. If you were ill of a fever, and that a Quack were to inſiſt on your pledging yourſelf to the abſtract principle and propriety of your taking a certain powder which he held in his hand, before he entered into ſuch details as ſhewing whether it was Arſenic or James's Powders, I ſhould ſuſpect that ſuch reaſoning on his part might be a prelude to his adminiſtering poiſon, and if you were to acquieſce, I ſhould infer that you were delirious. In a word, the inveſtigation of thoſe details, which the writer above cited would poſtpone, is in my mind not only incident, but inſeparably eſſential to a fair and rational diſcuſſion of that principle which we are thus called upon to examine before we go into ſuch details. Nay I feel myſelf warranted to go ſome ſteps farther. It is impoſſible to conſider the idea of Union between theſe two iſlands ſo abſtractedly, ſo to diveſt it of all its apurtenants, as not to perceive that on the part of Ireland it involves an extenſive and important transfer of conſtitutional rights and privileges, *which we have ſworn to defend*, and national honors and diſtinctions of which, however they may have been abuſed, as an Iriſhman I ſhould bluſh if I were not proud. To diſcuſs the principle of Union, and poſtpone all enquiry as to terms would be to view but one half of the Queſtion: It would be to contem-

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plate that portion of the meaſure which conſiſts of Iriſh ſurrender, whilſt that other portion is myſteriouſly withheld from our view, which *may or may not* conſiſt of adequate compenſation. I preſume not to controul the conſciences of other men: I pretend not to deny the poſſibility that I am myſelf under a deluſion, to which argument or reflection may put an end; but ſo long as my preſent opinions remain, I feel that in voting an Union to be advantageous, before I had heard what were to be the conditions, in voting for the ſurrender of my Country's privileges before I had ſecured that *more than compenſation* for which alone thoſe privileges ſhould be bartered, I ſhould not only belie my own underſtanding, by pronouncing that to be advantageous which could only be indifferent, but I ſhould (conſidering the oath which as a Yeoman I have taken) be guilty of wilful and corrupt perjury. Therefore if details muſt be poſtponed, and Government inſiſt on a previous queſtion on the ſubject of Union, the Members of the Legiſlature who coincide with me will vote againſt what is called the principle of Union; or (in more accurate language) againſt the uncompenſated ſurrender of Iriſh Rights.

If, indeed, the firſt meaſure propoſed to the Iriſh Parliament were to empower Commiſſioners to treat as to the terms of Union,

and if the terms, when ſettled by theſe Commiſſioners, were ſtill to be COMPLETELY, FAIRLY, *and* EFFECTUALLY *open to the reviſion, approbation, or rejection of the Parliament*, thoſe Members of the Legiſlature who thought with me might feel that by concurring in the appointment of ſuch Commiſſioners, (not entruſted with full and *final* powers,) they would betray neither the honor, nor intereſts of their Country: Such vote would be but the *proviſional* approbation of an Union: It would ſubſtantially combine the diſcuſſion of the abſtract principle with that of the details; and would amount to no broader a virtual poſition than this, *that ſuch terms of Union* MIGHT *be ſettled between the Siſter Countries, as would render the meaſure advantageous to Ireland*; a poſition which I am not diſpoſed to controvert.

I truſt, Sir, that both you and Government will agree with me, not only that an Union ought not to be forced upon the country, and that national repugnance *if fairly and fully collected*, is a ſufficient objection to *a meaſure of this peculiar deſcription*, however great and demonſtrable its utility in other reſpects may appear; but alſo that the meaſure, if perſiſted in, ſhould be conducted with alas! unexampled candour, and honeſt deliberation; and ſo far from being precipitated, ſhould be protracted almoſt to tedioufneſs.—Time ſhould be given to the

the community to conſider this weighty matter, and gradually arrive at thoſe concluſions, which perhaps the cabinet has long ſince attained. Iriſh prejudices ſhould not be ſpurned at, but humoured at the leaſt, if not reſpected. Heartily do I wiſh (for I am a friend to peace; though I truſt I ever ſhall prefer the perils of tumultuous freedom to the ſluggiſh and degrading tranquility of ſervitude), I ſay, ſincerely do I wiſh that the Miniſtry and the People may ſet an example of temper and moderation to each other: (I anticipate the ſneer with which ſuch a wiſh will be received); that the former may leave dexterity for more ordinary occaſions, and neither hurry on a proceeding which ſhould be conducted ſlowly, nor inveigle men into the admiſſion of any principle, with the view of perverting this to purpoſes not foreſeen nor intended by thoſe from whom it was obtained; and that the latter, if they reject the meaſure, may do ſo on diſcuſſion, and not refer ſo vital a queſtion to the arbitrament ofintereſt, paſſion, or precipitation.

I do not pretend to be verſed in the forms of Parliament or the Conſtitution; but ſure I am, that in a caſe and queſtion like the preſent, theſe ſhould not (in what caſe ſhould they?) be permitted to impede the moſt ample, accurate and ſatisfactory inveſtigation of the whole plan and conſequences of Union: ſure I am that when we

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are bartering ſo much of the ſubſtance of our Conſtitution, we ſhould not be too ſcrupulous about forms; but like Æneas ſhould thruſt aſide thoſe flimſy ſhapes, that would obſtruct our firm and deliberate paſſage to the ſecurity, the honor, and the freedom of our country. I hope and expect, that if this ſubject be brought forward in Parliament it will there be diſcuſſed with the *candour*, the freedom, and mature deliberation, which ſuit the dignity of that aſſembly, and the unrivalled importance of this meaſure.

Is it my ignorance which prevents me from diſcerning the difficulty, or impropriety, of ſubmitting to Parliament *in the firſt inſtance*, the outline and foundations of the propoſed Union? Am I abſurd in conceiving that by means of a meſſage from the Executive to each Chamber of Parliament, recommending it to them to take into their conſideration the beſt means of promoting a treaty of Union between Great Britain and Ireland, *on certain principles and baſes* therein ſtated and defined, we ſhould have the Royal faith and Miniſters' reſponſibility, (for by the principles of the Conſtitution the Speech of the King may be conſidered as the Language of the Miniſter) pledged for the fundamental principles on which Government wiſhed the Union to proceed? or if (as is very likely) I have made an ill choice of means, yet might it not be poſſible, conſiſtently with

with the rules of Parliament, and conſtitutional privileges of both countries, to deviſe other leſs objectionable means, equally calculated with thoſe which I have hinted, to attain the end which I propoſe? namely, furniſhing the Legiſlature at once with ſufficient materials for a thorough inveſtigation of the ſubject, and expoſing fairly to the contemplation both of Parliament and the country, the nature and baſis, and conſequently the merits and tendencies of the projected Coalition? We might thus be ſaved the fruitleſs trouble of appointing Commiſſioners, or ſhould appoint them with ſtrong expectation of a final adjuſtment. We ſhould then know what was to be the nature of the compenſation for our ſurrenders: whether we were changing the modes, rather than reſigning the ſecurity, or bleſſings of our Conſtitution; or whether it was intended to propoſe a diſgraceful traffick of freedom againſt trade: whether we ſhould drive theſe money-changers from the temple of our liberties, and in the eloquent language of a Britiſh Senator, exclaim "periſh our Commerce! and live our Conſtitution!"

I may hereafter reſume this ſubject.—I ſhall now recur to others, connected with the *general* object of our enquiry.

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I conceive it to be the humble privilege of a writer for the newſpaper, to be exempted from all rules of ſyſtematic arrangement, and allowed to ſet down his thoughts in the order in which they happen to occur.

I have (in my laſt) obſerved upon the tenor of the Bar Reſolution: permit me here to repeat that it ſtrikes me as an uncandid one, and betrays a ſly intention, not very dexterouſly or imperceptibly executed. The introducers of this motion evidently wiſhed to appear to the public to pronounce directly againſt the *principle* of an Union, while to thoſe who were not prepared to concur with them to this extent, they ſhould ſeem merely to deprecate an introduction of the meaſure as *inexpedient* at the preſent time. Thus by a ſort of quibble they would allure ſupport from many who would not otherwiſe have given it; but who will *in due time* find it hinted to them that they are *pledged* to a degree beyond what they intended, and that they have pronounced that Union is not merely objectionable on the ground of temporary expediency, but of eternal principle.

This ambuſcade is concealed behind the word *Innovation*. This term is univerſally accepted in a bad ſenſe. To innovate, we all know is (by the *norma liquendi*,) to introduce not *mere novelties* but *pernicious novelties*; and when we ſpeak of Conſtitution,

ſtitutions, to innovate is uſually underſtood as meaning to injure and impair, by the introduction of miſchievous and incongruous change.

But obſerve how the trick recoils on its contrivers! ſee what you have inadvertently pronounced! that thus to innovate is only improper at the preſent moment, but that on ſome other and future occaſion it may be very right and proper to impair the Conſtitution!

I have the honour to be, &c.

A BARRISTER.

TO *RICHARD JEBB*, ESQ.

LETTER IV.

SIR,

NO argument which comes from you can fail to deſerve an anſwer; permit me to attempt giving one to that which has lately appeared under your name, entitled, "A Reply to a Pamphlet," by ſome attributed to Mr. Cooke. For yourſelf, I (in common I believe, with all who have the honour of your acquaintance) feel a very ſincere reſpect: but your reaſonings do not impreſs me with a ſimilar ſenſation; I think them as weak and inconcluſive as is at all compatible with the good ſenſe and information of their author; and I truſt to your candour for forgiveneſs, if I treat them with all the freedom of controverſy, and diſcloſe their inſufficiency or contradictions with as much ſeverity as I am capable of.

You muſt expect from me no more regular arrangement than that numerical one which will ariſe

ariſe from my attending you page by page through your "Reply;" and even from this looſe order I ſhall ſometimes take occaſion to deviate.

The uſual fault of anſwers is, that they aim rather at detecting the weakneſs of an adverſary's reaſoning than the erroneouſneſs of his opinion. Your Reply is to a certain degree faulty in this reſpect; but the ſame obſervation applies with ſtill infinitely greater force to a Pamphlet called, "*Ceaſe your Funning*," which at the moſt proves only what is ſufficiently immaterial to the public, viz. that the ſubject has been objectionably treated by the author of the "Arguments for and againſt an Union." This fault I ſhall endeavour to avoid, and to fight my way through your Pamphlet to your ſubject.

You begin (p. 1.) by aſſuming that Legiſlative Union and ſurrender of Iriſh Legiſlature, are ſynonimous expreſſions; and call upon your countrymen to execute ſignal vengeance on a phantom which the mere force of your own patriotic imagination has conjured up.

I, for my part, conceive a Legiſlative Union to be no *ſurrender*, but a mere (and merely *local*) *transfer* of our Legiſlature: a changing of the ſphere and center of its operation, rather than an abating

ing of its ſupremacy. To the nature of ſuch a transfer I admit that certain modifications are inevitably incident: but to modify is not to impair; to abridge the numbers may not be to diminiſh the weight of our Legiſlature. We know that, in mechanicks, the efficacy and ponderance of a body depend as much on its poſition as on its dimenſions. Thus, if in that new ſituation which an Union might produce, a ſmaller corps of Iriſh Legiſlators would *in theory* be as adequate to the guardianſhip of Iriſh intereſts, as a greater body is found to be at preſent, then an abridgement of their numbers would be no impairing of their authority; the change of ſituation would, as it were, ſupply the deficit. Let me add, that if the proportion of Iriſh to Imperial Repreſentatives were found in theory to coincide with the ratio of Iriſh to Imperial greatneſs, and with the ratio of Iriſh to Imperial contribution, Ireland would have no reaſon to complain.

But I have been confining myſelf to theory; *In practice* I admit that the legiſlative protection given to Iriſh intereſts, has been ſuch, and ſuch the national ſatisfaction under their *domeſtic* Government, that the loſs of a reſident Parliament would be irreparable. But you cannot need to be informed that there are ſlanderous and deluded perſons who, blind to the merits of our domeſtic Legiſlature, pretend that the Parliament of Ireland

land has been found no tender guardian of the intereſts of her people ; that neither has the admiſſion of a great part of the Members of the Houſe of Commons been perfectly gratuitous, pure and conſtitutional, nor the conduct of thoſe admitted, altogether patriotic and diſintereſted ; that Borough Proprietors have acquired Peerages for themſelves by ſelling their retinue of popular Repreſentatives to the Miniſter ; and that if the Conſtitution has been well adminiſtered after all, the people have not to thank their Repreſentatives for this, but to rejoice that thoſe meaſures have been wiſe and virtuous, to which Government have bribed their Parliament to adhere.

All this we know to be a vile and groundleſs calumny ; and as ſuch I have heard your friend Mr. Plunket inveigh againſt it with his uſual ſerioufneſs, and with moſt becoming warmth.— The newſpapers ſtate him to have done ſo ſome months ago in the Houſe of Commons.

But ſurely it is not wonderful if the ſame ſlanderers who ſo malign our Repreſentative body ſhould hear with patience of its modification and removal! Nay, theſe calumniators proceed to aſſert that the meaſures of Government have been uniformly ſupported by "immenſe majorities" (p. 54) of our reſident Parliament ; and therefore they and their dupes might not be ſhocked

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at the idea of "relinquiſhing the foſtering care of their domeſtic Government;" (p. 36;) nor think that Miniſterial adherence of the Iriſh Repreſentative would you forebode as incidental to an Union, to be any thing ſtrange or novel in the political annals of this Country, (p. 63.) Indeed, as effects are uſually ſubſequent to their cauſes, they might even doubt whether that which had *preceded* the Union, could with propriety be deſcribed as originating *from* it. I fully admit with you the groſs ſophiſtry of ſuch objections; I admit that thoſe Parliamentary majorities which we have been commemorating, *as ſatisfactorily* prove the wiſdom of thoſe various ſyſtems, which ſuch majorities have ſucceſſively ſupported and approved, *as* the "immenſe majority" of the Bar which negatived the poſſibility of arranging any Union beneficial to Ireland, proves that no advantageous incorporation could be deviſed. But, conceding, as I do, that thoſe libellers ſhould be held in utter diſregard, who diſpute the unſullied purity of our reſident Parliament, I muſt at the ſame time grant that in, reconciling themſelves to the removal of this body, they act more conſiſtently than thoſe, who having for years paſt made the alledged profligacy of Parliament the theme of their invective, now hug this calumniated Legiſlature to their hearts, and feel horror at the idea of change or ſeparation; who having for years paſt

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ſneered at Iriſh Independence as a name, beneath which (as they falſely aſſerted) our Parliament cloaked a ſlaviſh practical dependence, now vehemently refuſe to ſurrender that Independence which they have been hitherto denying that we ever poſſeſſed!

In page 2, you adhere to your *petitio principii*, by calling Union the annihilation of our Parliament; but it muſt be confeſſed that your alluſion to the "*horrors and agonies of that bloody Rebellion*" from which the Country has emerged, and to "*thoſe animoſities civil and religious which*" (even before an Union, you ſay) "diſtract us," involves a ſtrong argument for abſtaining from all change, or attempting to correct the ſyſtem under which thoſe animoſities have ariſen, and with which, in the opinion of ſome theoriſts, they are connected.

It muſt alſo be allowed, that your endeavours to appeaſe the indignation of the country, by repreſenting that meaſure which you recommend to them to meet with *calmneſs*, as "*an injurious inſult*," are very meritorious and well-judged; and the conſiſtency of that praiſe which in p. 16 you beſtow on the mild and *tranquilizing* ſpirit of Lord Cornwallis's adminiſtration, with thoſe triangular and gallows terrors which in p. 2 you repreſent as ſtifling the public voice, and impeding

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all diſcuſſion; the conſiſtency of thoſe two paſſages, I ſay, is too obvious to need comment.—I am far from conceiving (p. 3) "that the magic "of the Secretary's pen could extend the *omni*-"*potence* of Parliament to the works of nature;" inaſmuch as I am unable to ſee how omnipotence could be increaſed; but as to that annihilation of the Iriſh channel, which ſtrikes you to be ſo impracticable, I doubt whether the naval power of Britain has not already atchieved it. I doubt whether the greatneſs and glory of the Engliſh fleets have not, to all political intents, formed ſuch a bridge of communication as to warrant us in aſſerting that the intervening channel does not ſeparate the ſiſter countries.

In page 17 you undertake to diſprove that in caſe of an Union the Britiſh Parliament would be much ſwayed by the weight of Iriſh Members. A caviller might object that your argument is one *determinable* on the life of Mr. Pitt; and that the benefits of Union are (if they exiſt at all) too permanent to depend on the life of one man. But I wave ſuch objections. You have ſome pretence for regarding Pitt as immortal.—Indeed when (p. 18) you inform us that "the influence of all "Iriſh Members muſt ſubmit to the mechanics "of a ſingle Engliſh town," I am not ready with my aſſent; for I doubt whether it would be the

the intereſt of the *Empire* that Iriſh influence *ſhould* ſo yield; and I heſitate to ſuppoſe that the Britiſh Miniſter would ſacrifice the *Intereſts of the Empire* to the mechanics of a *ſingle town*. Through the whole of your diſcuſſion you appear indeed to me to aſſume, that after an Union ſhall have taken place, though the Legiſlatures of the ſiſter countries are incorporated, *their intereſts will remain diſtinct*. This however, remains to be proved; and to prove it, the *terms* of Union ſhould be examined. That Union alone do I pronounce to be uninjurious, which ſhall identify the intereſts, as well as incorporate the Legiſlatures, of the Britiſh Iſlands: which ſhall transform Ireland into a collection of Engliſh Counties; and ſhall render Britain the foſtering protector of Iriſh intereſts, on the principle of ſelf-preſervation. This idea of the identification of intereſts, ſeems to anſwer that argument in p. 27 which you found on the ſuppoſition that the Iriſh Members would be to the Britiſh in the proportion of one to five. As well (to adopt the words of your adverſary) "may "Yorkſhire complain that the Members for Great "Britain are to the Members for Yorkſhire in the "proportion of fifty to one." (p. 46.) In truth my opinion is that in page 63 you ſtate the true danger, and that which the terms of Union might be contrived to obviate; viz. the adherence of the body of Iriſh Repreſentatives to the Miniſtry. On this I ſhould remark, firſt, that without

an Union, large miniſterial majorities have been found attainable, (no doubt, on account of the wiſdom and purity of all the meaſures of all our adminiſtrations :)—ſecondly, that the proviſions of the Union might be pointed to the prevention of this miſchief :—Thirdly, that the preſent day ſeems one in which Royal influence is leſs likely, than popular power, to become unconſtitutionally predominant :—Fourthly, that if the Empire were entruſted to one Imperial Legiſlature, Miniſters might conceive themſelves to be exempted from the neceſſity of having recourſe to thoſe corrupt and indirect means, which their enemies impute to them to have reſorted to, in order to prevent the diſtinctneſs of our Legiſlatures from tending to any diſmemberment of the Empire ; or from producing, in *practice*, thoſe impediments to the ſyſtem and uniformity of imperial regimen, which might ſeem to ariſe out of the *theory* of our *diſtinct*, (as contraſted with incorporate,) *independence*.—*Perhaps* our diſtinctneſs has had tendencies, which corruption has been moſt miſchievouſly applied to correct ; and render the empire in practice " *Simplex et unum*."—Fifthly, that at all events a compariſon of pages 27 and 63 ſeems to convict you of inconſiſtency. In the former, you meaſure the Iriſh againſt the Engliſh Members, and ſtate the proportion as one to five: in the latter you repreſent the Iriſh Corps of Legiſlators as conſtantly forming a part of the miniſterial

niſterial phalanx. In the firſt part of your argument you lament over the Iriſh, as left in a ſad minority: in the latter, your cauſe of lamentation is, that they will conſtantly form a part of the Miniſter's majority. I have no objection to crying over either of theſe events with you; but do not inſiſt on my crying over both! I cannot concede you more than this *alternative* lamentation; ſince if the Engliſh Members be to the Iriſh in the proportion of five to one, theſe latter can do no miſchief by adhering to the Miniſter: for your hypotheſis oppoſing the Britiſh and Iriſh to each other, it follows that the Miniſter would be in a minority: and on the other hand, if the Iriſh conſtitute part (p. 63) of the large majorities of the Miniſter, this balancing of them with their Engliſh Brethren muſt ceaſe, both being *ex hypotheſi*, thrown into the ſame ſcale.

I ſhall trouble you with another letter on the ſubject of your "Reply." For the preſent I ſhall conclude by obſerving, that I do not conceive the queſtion to be, as you and others ſtate it, viz. whether there be any thing which by an Union we can obtain from England, which ſhe *might* not grant us without an Union. The enquiry is not what England *can* (without an Union) grant; but what ſhe *will*, or *ought* to grant? I can conceive that a *ſound* policy might check the liberality of her conceſſions to a nation connected with her

her as Ireland is. I can conceive that a narrow and *jealous* policy might dictate the ſame reſerve and œconomy of conceſſion; (and in the latter caſe I admit, that we ſhould treat cautiouſly with the country that uſed us ſo;) but in either caſe, I ſhould feel that every *obſtacle* to our obtaining conceſſions from England, which ariſes out of our preſent relative ſituation, is a *reaſon* (I do not enquire its force) for our conſenting to change that ſituation, for one leſs incompatible with liberality on the part of Britain; and with reſpect to any increaſe of our taxes, which an Union would produce, the *terms* might provide againſt our being over-burthened; and it ſtrikes me, that at preſent Ireland contributes leſs than her equitable ſhare to the expences of the Britiſh Empire.

I have the honor to be, &c.

A BARRISTER.

LETTER

LETTER V.

TO *RICHARD JEBB*, ESQ.

SIR,

NO terms of Union having yet been propoſed, we can only give our opinion on the abſtract principle of parliamentary incorporation; and what your ſentiments on this ſubject are, I profeſs myſelf at a loſs to diſcover. In p. 56, you ſtate your opinion to be, "that *any* incorporated Union with Britain is pregnant with diſadvantages:" in p. 65, you deſcribe, Union (to which you chuſe to give the nick-name of *Revolution*;) as indefenſible, without the aid of French Principles; or on any other than modern revolutionary ground; and I might cite other paſſages, alike expreſſive of your abhorrence to that which for the preſent is the *only* ſubject for diſcuſſion, (and one, in my mind, difficult to diſcuſs) viz. the Principle of an Union. But when, from ſuch declarations, I ſeem to have collected your opinion, I find you (in p. 55) aſſerting that that majority of the Bar, *with which you concurred*, "condemns not the principle of incorporating the Parliaments;" that "it preſumes not, without due diſcuſſion, to ſanction or condemn."

demn." Theſe paſſages I find it difficult to reconcile. But I would aſk of any reaſonable and candid man, whether the import of the Bar Reſolution be nothing more than what you ſtate? At a meeting of the Barriſters of the Lawyer's Corps, convened by Military Orders, for the purpoſe of diſcuſſing "buſineſs of the utmoſt importance," (to uſe the language of the ſummonſes,) Captain Saurin did ſo explicitly "condemn the principle of an incorporating Union," as to conceive that the mere propoſal of ſuch a meaſure was analogous, in enormity, to a project for transferring the national purſe from the Commons to the Crown, and one which offered to him the painful, (but not embarraſſing) alternative, of violating his oath of conſtitutional allegiance, or reſigning his commiſſion. When the ſpirit of Anti-Unioniſm had tranſmigrated from the Lawyers' Corps to the Bar Meeting, and that an *equally real* change had metamorphoſed *Captain* Saurin into one of his Majeſty's *Council* learned in the Law, can we readily believe that a Reſolution propoſed by him, and carried in the very terms in which it was propoſed, was intended to import no condemnation of the principle of incorporation? Has not the reſpectable ſeconder of this Reſolution avowed *his* "condemnation of the principle," in an animated publication, to which he has annexed his name? Does the Bar debate (if faithfully reported, and if a collection

of

of ſpeeches on *one* ſide deſerves the name of a debate,) afford no clue for detecting the import of the Reſolution? or do the ſpeeches of thoſe who ſupported it, lead us to conclude that it involved no condemnation of the principle, but merely went to demand a tranquil moment "for its diſcuſſion?" Does that burſt of applauſe with which, the annotator informs us that the Aſſembly received a quibble, terminated by an oath,* furniſh no ſymptom of diſapprobation of that principle, which you would have us believe that the Bar Reſolution has neither ſanctioned nor condemned? In ſhort, is not the debate † a Dictionary, by the help of which we can tranſlate the meaning of that Reſolution in which it ended? It merely, ſay you, informs us that Union is an *innovation.*— I have already, in my ſecond Letter, ſuggeſted that this epithet is either inſignificant and irrelevant, or ſlyly miſapplied. For my part, I am far from imputing to Mr. Saurin, the introduction of unmeaning expletives into any compoſition of his; and when, in p. 64 of the Pamphlet, before me you treat of that "INNOVATION, *which was to wreſt the Sceptre from the hands of the Sovereign*;" by applying it ſo aptly, you ſhew that you too know

* The words were that "Ireland was never intended by God or Nature for a Province, and that *by* God it ſhould never be a Province;" or to that effect. See debate.

† In which, (doubtleſs by mere accident) the punctuation is not ſo *ſtrangely* incorrect, as in the diſfigured proteſt which is annexed to the debate.

know the force, and nature of this term, and help us to aſſign a reaſon for its making its appearance, in ſtaring and emphatical capitals in the Bar Reſolution.

——— *Cunctando reſtituit Rem!*—Who that heard this claſſic praiſe appropriated to the Bar, could ſuppoſe that they had entitled themſelves to it by negativing, by a great majority, Mr. Daly's motion for *delaying* the diſcuſſion of the queſtion "a little month?"—Alas! I doubt whether our Iriſh conduct, in the preſent warfare, ſo cloſely reſembles that of Fabius, as it does the briſker plans of his rival Hannibal; one of whoſe expedients, as I think Livy has informed us, was to let looſe a parcel of *flaming Bulls* againſt the Roman, in the vain hope of diſlodging him from his ſtrong hold; an anecdote, *(ſoit dit en paſſant,)* which ſeems ſtrongly to favour the hypotheſis of our Phœnician deſcent, ſo ably ſupported by Colonel Vallancey, and Sir Laurence Parſons.

In my laſt Letter I proteſted againſt being confined to any more methodical arrangement, than ſuch as the regular purſuit of your pages would ſupply, and from even this looſe order, I requeſted a liberty of deviation, which perhaps you will think me to have abuſed.

Having

Having in page 15, according to your uniform practice of *aſſumption*, pronounced that incorporating Union, which yet, as a member of the Bar majority, you diſclaim having condemned, to be the *deſtruction* of our native Parliament, you proceed (in the ſame page) to *aſſume* that Britiſh interference in Iriſh Government, "the neceſſity of which," in a *due degree*, "has never" you ſay "been combated but by thoſe who wiſhed to diſſolve all connexion," will by means of an Union be encreaſed to a *degree* which will be *exceſſive*. A poſition ſo material ought as I conceive to come forward in the ſhape of a fairly deduced concluſion; it ſhould be introduced by premiſſes, and not (with that bold and barefaced aſſurance, which ſome ſlanderers have ſuppoſed to be characteriſtic of our Nation,) to bolt in upon us in the form of mere aſſertion. I, for my part, am ſo far from aſſenting to the truth of this poſition, that I doubt whether Union would not put an end to much indirect and anomalous Britiſh interference: I doubt whether Britiſh interference be not in ſome meaſure the creature of the preſent ſtate of our connexion: Whether it has not been adopted (I do not enquire how rightly) as a corrective, and to counteract in *practice* thoſe tendencies to variance, incongruity, and diſcordance, in the general management of the entire Empire, which might in *theory* appear to be the likely effects of, I ſhould rather ſay the diſtinct-

neſs than independence of our Legiſlatures.—Some perhaps might go farther ſtill; and doubt whether, in the preſent ſtate of our connexion, Iriſh and Britiſh intereſts were neceſſarily the ſame: If any perſons ſhould go ſo far, and ſhould add to their hypotheſis, by giving credit to thoſe ſlanderers who defame the integrity of our Iriſh Parliament, it might follow that they would expect a Union to put a period to that corruption, which by turning theoretical independence into practical ſubſerviency, procured a ſacrifice of Iriſh to Britiſh intereſts, when the two happened to claſh, and thus conſolidated the Empire by filling up with money thoſe imperial and growing breaches, which were the conſequences of the theoretic diſtinctneſs of its parts. Who would not wiſh to render ſo foul a cement unneceſſary! But how would an Union have this effect? I conceive that an Union, conſiſting of proper terms, would identify the intereſts, as well as Legiſlatures of the united iſlands. If ſo, Iriſh intereſts no longer diſtinct, could no longer be ſacrificed; nor need Iriſhmen be bribed to officiate at the ſacrifice: Iriſh welfare and proſperity would have Britiſh ſelfiſhneſs for their guarantee: *They* would have it ſo, not only in the main, as is the caſe at preſent, but in every particular and detail.—What then would become of your terror at leaving your "Commerce for ever at the mercy of (what you call) a *foreign* Parliament, where our relative ſtrength

ſtrength will be not more than one to five?" (p. 40.) I can conceive a poſſible ſcheme of Union, which would render this ſtriking of the proportion between Britiſh and Iriſh Repreſentatives as inconcluſive, or nearly ſo, (to recur to a reference already made) as a compariſon between the Britiſh and the Yorſhire Repreſentation. And that ſuch will not be the projected ſcheme, is what, until the terms be propoſed, we have no ground for concluding. Repreſentation ought, I take it, to be in the ratio of contribution: the origin, and peculiar function of the Houſe of Commons proves that it ſhould be ſo; and therefore the Scotch Union was conceded by England on equitable terms, in as much as Scotland, aſſuming about a fortieth ſhare of the public burthens, obtained an eleventh ſhare of Repreſentation; terms ſo advantageous that, if Burnet and other Hiſtorians may be believed, "nothing but the conſideration of the ſafety that was to be procured by it to England, could have brought the Engliſh to agree to a project, *that in every branch of it was much more favourable to the Scotch Nation.*" If ſimilar views to ſafety now actuate Great Britain, Ireland has ſimilar grounds for expecting greatly advantageous terms of Union; and if the incorporation were intimate, complete and juſt, as reaſonably might this Country repine at being at the mercy of an Imperial (not foreign) Parliament, as the limb might repine at being at the mercy of the man; as reaſonably

might

might one member of the Empire entertain jealouſy of another, as my leg might be jealous of my partiality to my arm.

In p. 40 you admit "that equal laws affecting "all parts of the empire will be the conſequence "of Union; but you proteſt againſt any inference in favour of the Union itſelf, conſidered in a commercial point of view: You ſay that equal laws may themſelves "be an evil of the "greateſt magnitude; and would for example effect the ruin of certain manufactures, which you enumerate by way of ſpecimen. My commercial knowledge is ſo ſcanty as to be contemptible; but your reaſoning (in the above cited paſſage) appears to me refutable. You firſt ſtate, what I preſume you are warranted in ſuppoſing, viz. that in *our preſent circumſtances*, equal laws would be pernicious; and protecting duties are neceſſary: You then aſſume that an Union, would leave us exactly in the *ſame circumſtances*, and commercial ſituation, in which we ſtand at preſent; and you conclude that ſuch Union, by introducing equal laws, would be the ruin of many of our manufactures. The weakneſs of this argument can be very ſhortly ſtated: It conſiſts in this, that your *aſſumption* of that which it was incumbent on you to prove, *contributes eſſentially to the ſupport of your concluſion*. *Negatur Minor* would I believe be the anſwer of the ſchools

ſchools to your ſyllogiſm. You diſclaim being an "advocate for protecting duties:" you think them "in general founded on the moſt erroneous principles, but neceſſary in our particular "ſituation, contending with a ſmall capital, and "an infant eſtabliſhment, againſt an old eſtabliſhment and ENORMOUS capital." But who can ſay that Union may not put an end to this *particular ſituation*, which compels us to recur to a commercial arrangement, which is the leſs to be regretted, becauſe you admit it to be *founded on the moſt erroneous principles?* Who can ſay that after union this conteſt may not ceaſe? That our commercial exertions may not have no longer to contend with a ſmall capital and infant eſtabliſhment at home, but be aided by an enlarged capital and an eſtabliſhment of rapid growth? Who can prove that Union may not preclude all conteſt between our capital and eſtabliſhment, and thoſe of Britain? That they may not ceaſe to be diſtinct, and become parts of ONE Imperial commercial eſtabliſhment? If an Empire, no more than a family, when divided againſt itſelf can ſtand, ſhall the Imperial Miniſter encourage diviſions between the parts of that Empire, which it is his taſk to uphold? Shall the no longer Britiſh, but after Union the Imperial Miniſter, or Legiſlature, refuſe to promote the proſperity of the Empire through all its parts? or neglect the advancement of ſo eſſential a department of it as Ireland?

Ireland? You ſeem in p. 27 to conſider Union as a financial project: Now where is the conſiſtency in imputing to England the deſign of throwing a portion of the public burthen upon Ireland, yet at the ſame time of ſo neglecting or reſtricting her commercial progreſs, as to render her incapable of bearing the impoſition? How, in a word, does it follow that becauſe unequal laws may be neceſſary in our preſent ſituation, they will continue to be requiſite when that ſituation ſhall have been changed? As to that *enormity* of the Britiſh capital which you ſtate, if you mean that Britain affords a field too narrow for its employment, it may follow that, when an Union ſhall have taken place, the ſurplus will contribute to enlarge the capital of our country.

I ſhall conclude this letter, (reſerving to myſelf the right of addreſſing you once again,) by obſerving that your account (p. 43) of the affair of the Malt Duty ſeems inaccurate. The Scots in oppoſing the impoſition of that tax, "inſiſted" (ſays Burnet) on an article of the "Union, by which it was ſtipulated," (not that no malt duty ſhould *ever* extend to Scotland; but merely) "that no duty ſhould be laid on the Malt in Scotland *during the War.*" What then was the alledged violation of the treaty of Union? The Scotch admitted that "peace with Spain *was as good as* "*made*, and *was every day expected*; but it was not

not yet proclaimed, nor even ſigned." Thus the mighty breach of Treaty on the part of England, conſiſted only in this, that ſhe laid a certain duty on Scotland a few days before the time when, according to ſome technical rules of conſtruction, ſhe would, under the articles of Union, be entitled to impoſe it.

If you were to take the queſtion up on other grounds, and ſtate this act as an impoſt ruinous to Scotland (p. 40) I ſhould oppoſe to you, 1ſt. the opinion of the Legiſlature on a matter affecting that Empire, the whole of which it was their intereſt to protect: 2dly, our experience of near a century, ſhewing that this was not a meaſure ruinous to Scotland.

I have the honour to be, &c.

A BARRISTER.

LETTER

LETTER VI.

TO *RICHARD JEBB*, ESQ.

SIR,

HAVING in pages 5, 6, and 7, alluded to the conduct of the Iriſh Lords and Commons in the matter of the Regency, and (p. 7) pretty plainly inſinuated the reliance which may be placed on the ſervility of that native Parliament, which yet you are ſo loth to ſurrender,* you, in p. 24, enquire whether, " except the Regency," an inſtance can be produced of colliſion between the Britiſh and Iriſh Parliaments, on Imperial queſtions ?—Give me leave ,inſtead of anſwering, to put a queſtion to you.—Could Hypotheſis ſuggeſt a more vital imperial queſtion, than this which has ariſen in fact ?—Could Theory *ſuppoſe* an example more illuſtrative of the inconvenient and diſcordant tendencies of an organization, which allots two imperial independent Legiſlatures to one empire, than this, which Experience and Practice have *produced*?—Was not this an inſtance, in which the *diſtinctneſs* of the Legiſlatures in the ſiſter countries induced a practical violation of that principle, which you yourſelf very amply admit, viz. that " there is as much " neceſſity

* Aſſuming Union to be ſuch ſurrender.

"neceſſity that the Regent of Britain ſhould be "Regent of Ireland, as that there ſhould be "one King;" and as much neceſſity that the Regency in each country ſhould be inveſted "with the ſame powers," and "lie under the ſame reſtrictions," as that the Crown in both kingdoms, ſhould be poſſeſſed of "the ſame "prerogatives?"—Had the melancholy period of interregnum been prolonged, ſhould we not have had different Executives for Great Britain and Ireland?—different both in the *perſons* exerciſing the power,—and in the *degree of power* exerciſed?—And would not this imperial anomaly have originated from the diſtinct independence of our Legiſlatures?

In p. 29 commences your attempt to ſhew that the Scotch Union affords no argument in favour of that which is now ſuppoſed to be in contemplation. The firſt diſtinction which you inſinuate between the caſes of Scotland and this country, is to be collected from theſe words: "Nature "had already made England and Scotland one "country."—If the project now in hand, were to extend the South wall to Holyhead,—or if our Parliament expected that any act of their's would repeal the laws of Nature, and diveſting Ireland of its inſular ſituation, would ſolder it into part of the continent of Britain, then I admit that your obſervation would be very pertinent; but, as I have

not heard that Government entertains any ſuch hopes, or intentions,—I feel warranted to anſwer your obſervation by remarking, that if Nature made Britain and Ireland two iſlands, ſound policy has made them one Empire; nor was this *political* conſolidation any infringement of the laws of Nature, or incompatible with that merely *local* diviſion, which ſhe had ordained. If the Iriſh Channel has not furniſhed a ſufficient impediment to that organization which has compounded the ſiſter Countries into one Empire,—neither can it, as I conceive, ſupply a concluſive argument againſt the expediency of allotting *one* Legiſlature to *one* Empire.—That the geographical connexion between the Northern and Southern quarters of Great Britain may have afforded ſome additional arguments for their *political* incorporation,—is what I do not feel it material to deny: the interpoſition of the Menai Straights may, for aught I know, (or care) render the annexation of Angleſea *leſs* theoretically proper, than that of Caernarvonſhire, to Great Britain! but we ſhould deſpiſe the Stateſman who ſuffered *ſuch* ſhades of diſtinction to influence his practice, or required more than enough of reaſons for his conduct; and thoſe who would diſprove the utility of Iriſh, by urging the ſuperior neceſſity for Scotch Union, might as well argue againſt my eating becauſe I was hungry, on the ground that if another had not eaten, he would have

have been ſtarved.—*The "political circumſtances" of Scotland and England, you ſay, "rendered an Union neceſſary to the repoſe and "ſafety, the laws and liberties of England."

In like manner I conceive "the political circumſtances," of England, *Ireland*, *France*, and *indeed all Europe*, *at this day*, to be ſuch as at leaſt prevents *every* Union between the Britiſh iſlands from being ſo *inexpedient*, as that we ſhould reject the incorporation, without liſtening to the terms upon which it may be offered.

"The *Laws and Religions* of England and "Scotland," you obſerve, "were different;—"and their Crowns, accidentally placed on the "head of the ſame Monarch, were upon her "demiſe, to be ſeparated again." The tendency of all theſe aſſertions I do not plainly diſcern;—but gueſſing very vaguely at their application, I ſhould anſwer them by obſerving,—that the Scotch Laws and Religion—different *before* the Union from thoſe of England, differ *ſtill*:—that if, in the caſe of Scotland, the neighbour Crowns, *accidentally* placed on the ſame head, were, on the demiſe of Ann, to be *ſeparated* again,—ſo in the caſe of Ireland, the combined Executive

* The preſent ſituation of Europe furniſhes reaſons for Iriſh Union, more than compenſating any geographical reaſons which, in 1706, might have been aſſigned for the Scotch Union.

Executive Authorities, placed *conſtitutionally* in the ſame hands, and conſiſting of the ſame prerogatives, were, in the inſtance of the Regency, more than in danger of being *ſeparated*—and decompoſed into different degrees of power, committed to different hands;—and I might add that an Union would have precluded the poſſibility of ſuch diviſion.—But with reſpect to this Union of the Crowns, I ſhould remind you that the ſame Scottiſh party (with the Duke of Hamilton, if my memory ſerves me, or Lord Annandale at its head) which oppoſed an Union, was willing to ſecure the Hanover ſucceſſion, and therefore, that the ground which you have taken fails,—viz. of a neceſſity for the Scotch Union, as the *only* means for preventing a ſeparation of the Crowns, on the death of Anne.

As to what you mention with reſpect to Religion, I would remind you, that if that difference which in England and Scotland, you ſay, prevailed between the religions *as well of the people*, as of the ſtate, afforded an argument for their incorporation,—the religious perſuaſion of a *great* majority of the Iriſh people, differing from that which the Britiſh Empire has eſtabliſhed, and the Britiſh people profeſs—furniſhes what, at leaſt, is *no reaſon againſt* the projected Union; and I ſhould remind you farther, that the Iriſh Lords, having firſt in the reign of Ann, petitioned for an Union, when they could not obtain

obtain it, concurred in enacting that penal code, which the benignity of the preſent King and Parliament has abrogated.

You aſk, whether "any theory, however "wild, will juſtify us in ſaying, there is a "danger of our ſeparation from England?"—It ſeems to me, that certain *theoretical* works, entitled Reports of the Secret Committees of our Lords and Commons,—will juſtify us in ſuggeſting the exiſtence of ſuch a danger;—nay will juſtify us ſo amply, that I am tempted (with ſome variation) to retort your interrogatory, and enquire whether "any theory, however wild, will "warrant us in *doubting* that there is ſome danger "of ſeparation?"—I would aſk, if theory does not concur with experience to ſilence every doubt that there is danger, of at leaſt a bloody attempt at ſeparation?——But you proceed to aſk,—whether, even admitting ſuch a danger, it be one which Union would remove?—It might perhaps be a ſufficient anſwer to your premature oppoſition, to aver that the tendencies of Union to remove this peril, muſt depend on the *yet unknown* terms and nature of ſuch Union;—but I prefer meeting you more directly, and aſſerting, that thoſe regulations and arrangements which, from its eſſential nature, Union *muſt* involve, and eſpecially which, in the preſent caſe, Union is likely to involve, will in my opinion leſſen, if not remove, the danger of ſeparation.

When

When (p. 30 and 31) you notice thoſe "paſ-
"ſions," and that diſlike to England "which-
ſo "affected the Scots," as not to permit them
"to advert to thoſe obvious principles" which you admit would have ſhewn them that "the Union "was no leſs advantageous to Scotland than ne-
"ceſſary to England,"—you appear to me to ſuggeſt nothing ſo ſtrongly as the likelihood that you yourſelf, in common with many of our countrymen, are delivering up your reaſon to the miſguidance of your prejudices, and indulging paſſions which make you blind to the moſt obvious principles; and in truth I conſider the preſent queſtion to be one ſo well calculated for exciting thoſe prejudices, of which National Vanity is the ſource, that I am diſpoſed to wonder at the temper and ſilent forbearance of the Iriſh Nation at large, and *at that confinement, which I obſerve, of the ſpirit of anti-unioniſm to Dublin, whoſe (rather perhaps apparent than real) intereſts raiſe ſome objection to its competence, and a very ſerious one to its credibility, as a witneſs on this great national concern.*

When you touch on the connection of the Scots with France, I leave it to Hoche and Humbert, Tone and Mc. Nevin, to anſwer the argument which ſuch an alluſion involves; and when you notice "the ſevere but perhaps neeeſſary po-
"licy" adopted with reſpect to commerce by England towards Scotland, I thank you for having

ing refuted thoſe arguments which you inſinuate, 1ſt, where you aſk if there be any commercial benefit which an Union could produce to Ireland, that Britain WITHOUT an Union might not grant? and 2dly, where you hope (p. 50) that the chance of Cork to be choſen as a Naval ſtation will not be affected by the ſucceſs of the project for an Union. You yourſelf admit that *until* the Realms of England and Scotland became united, the ſame policy which was ſevere, might yet be neceſſary: *like caſe, like rule,* is a good legal maxim

But when you refer the Rebellions of 1715 and 1745 to the Scotch Union, you differ from ſome hiſtorians of good reputation; who have on the contrary referred them to that mere attachment to the family of Stuart which preceded, and was unconnected with the Union, and which, though no legiſlative incorporation had taken place, would as certainly have generated a Rebellion againſt a Scotch act of ſettlement, ſecuring the Hanover ſucceſſion.

To attribute the inſurrections of 1715 and 1745 to the Union, is as inconſiſtent with the hiſtory of thoſe tranſactions themſelves, as it is with all hiſtorical tradition upon the ſubject. "All thoſe," ſays Tindal, "who adhered inflexibly to the Ja-
"cobite Intereſt, oppoſed every ſtep that was
"made towards an Union with great vehemence;

"FOR

" For *they ſaw that the Union ſtruck at the root of all* " *their deſigns for a new Revolution.*" Now, that theſe deſigns preceded that Union which it was feared would impede their execution, ſeems an inference ſo plain, that I doubt whether I ſhould be prevented from drawing it, by even the opinion of a majority of 164 to 32.

I doubt whether in the face of your *four* Repreſentatives (p. 52) of all profeſſional merit at the Iriſh Bar—I ſhould not venture to aſſert that the root muſt have had exiſtence, in order to its being ſtruck at;—and that the Union could not at once have ſown the *ſeed* of thoſe revolutionary deſigns, and been the meaſure which ſtruck at the *root* from whence they ſprung.

I maintain therefore *firſt*—that the ſecuring of the Hanover ſucceſſion does not appear to have been no otherwiſe attainable than by an Union; and *ſecondly*, that the ſeeds and cauſes of the Scotch rebellions, were antecedent to, and diſtinct from the Union. I may therefore admit with you, that " it was not until after 1746, that " Scotland began to feel the beneficial effects of Union:" i. e. It was not until thoſe obſtacles to its benefits had ceaſed, which had ariſen *aliunde*; which had been produced by cauſes perfectly diſtinct.

There

There appear to have been two parties in Scotland: one of *inflexible* Jacobites, whose ground of opposition to Union, was its tendency to counteract their revolutionary projects. *This* faction would have been as averse to securing the Hanover succession by a settlement, as by an Union; and to the family attachments of this party, and not to the Union, are the rebellions to be ascribed.

Another party, averse from the Union, was yet content to secure the Hanover succession;—and it seems probable, that without an Union, this could have been atchieved.

Thus both your positions appear to be ill-founded: *first*, that in the case of Scotland, the mere alternative was Union of the kingdoms, or separation of the Crowns;—*secondly*, that the Union was the source of the rebellions. With the two positions on which they were built, your two inferences must also fall to the ground: viz. *first*, that a primary motive for the Scotch Union was one which does not exist to justify an Irish one; *secondly*, that Union is likely to produce rebellion. That the Union was, in Scotland, a cause of much discontent to many,—and consequently, by making the public mind more combustible, contributed to feed those flames of rebellion, which other causes had lighted up is a posi-

tion neither controvertible, nor very material; at leaſt it beſt deſerves to be recollected by thoſe, who by now zealouſly irritating the public mind, are at once diſqualifying them from the diſcuſſion of a very ſerious ſubject, and (I hope inadvertently) laying the angry foundations of rebellion. But let all this be as it may, we know by experience, that without an Union,—*nay, that under circumſtances the oppoſite to thoſe which Union would induce*, Ireland can produce a ſufficiently formidable rebellion:—ſo formidable, that I am led to enquire whether a radical change of its ſituation might not abate ſo bloody and lamentable a fertility.

I have the Honour to be, &c.

A BARRISTER.

LETTER

LETTER VII.

TO *RICHARD JEBB*, ESQ.

SIR,

I ASK pardon, Sir, for troubling you with another Letter: It ſhall be the laſt. In writing it, I ſhall continue the ſame courſe which I have hitherto purſued; and not confine my attempts to detecting the inſufficiency of the arguments which you have uſed; but go into the queſtion more largely, and directly, and endeavour to prove the fallacy of the opinion which you have embraced.

You muſt however permit me to begin by ſmiling at your reluctance in page 36, to "relinquiſh that domeſtic Government, under whoſe *foſtering care*," (now ſee page 9,) you tell us that "Catholic petitions have been ignominiouſly kicked out of the Houſe of Commons, and next Seſſion paſſed: Full participation of Rights been promiſed; and in the ſame Seſſion, the ſtipulated terms refuſed: Violent Grand Jury Reſolutions" been entered into; and "other groſs and unfortunate

fortunase inconſiſtencies" occurred, " *which diſgraced our Parliament and Country.*" It is true you attribute this to Britiſh interference; but, though you ſhould be warranted in doing ſo, ſtill it appears to me that, if we admit the truth of your picture, we ſhould not be inconſolable for the loſs of that " Parliamentary traffic," (p. 51,) which you deplore: Of that " rank majority," (not the 164,) from which it is your boaſt that our Judges are not ſelected; of that " domeſtic Government" which you repreſent as having ſo " diſgraced itſelf;" (p. 9.) or of that " foſtering care," to which, in our " Parliamentary market," Britiſh interference has found it ſo eaſy to put an end. (p. 9.) Surely you will not, on reflection, perſiſt in your opinion, (p. 37) that " no compenſation can be made for" ſuch " an independent Conſtitution" as you have been deſcribing; *i. e.* a Conſtitution, whoſe *independence depends* on the pleaſure of the Britiſh Cabinet: For my part, I feel that I ſhould part ſuch an independence with dry eyes; ſuppoſing your implication true, (which I utterly deny,) that Union is equivalent to a ſurrender of Iriſh independence. I have already ſuggeſted, and here beg to repeat, that Union is no more an abolition of Iriſh, than of Britiſh independence: That it will efface the independence of this Country, not by making it *ſubject to*, but *one with* Britain:— that the ſecuring to Ireland in this coalition, an

adequate

adequate ſhare of the Imperial Repreſentation, is a matter which regards the terms, not the principle of Union; and which we are not authoriſed to preſume will be neglected: that at preſent we are *one* Empire with *two* Legiſlatures: which, if we adopt the eſtabliſhed analogy between bodies politic, and bodies natural, may be aſſimilated to one man, with two wills: I do not recollect that the ſcriptures encourage us to expect much energy from a being thus conſtituted; on the contrary I think they inform us that "the double-minded man is unſtable in all his ways."

In page 65 you take a flight into the regions of declamation, far beyond my power, or wiſh to follow. I content myſelf with the humbler province of examining the ground from which you ſoar; and which ſeems to me to be an utter miſconception of the meaning of that author, whom you have undertaken to anſwer.—He merely cited the example of France, to ſhew that the incorporation of federated States conduces to Imperial energy. But he has no where ſaid that the projected incorporation was intended to be upon the French model; or that it was meant "to render Ireland abſolutely (or at all) dependent on the will of Britain." He has only ſought to ſhew by example, that the more intimate union of thoſe imperially allied States, which conſtitute the Britiſh Empire, would encreaſe the force

force of the thus conſolidated State: of that Empire, which, (p. 25) you admit to be engaged "in miraculous ſtruggles, for the ſupport of a "pre-eminence which ſecures to every part, (*and* "*Ireland is a part*) its conſtitution, liberties and "laws." He has not ſaid, becauſe every incorporation has this tendency to give Imperial ſtrength, that therefore Ireland ſhould aſſent to any Union derogatory to her intereſts, or analogous to what has abſorbed ſmaller ſurrounding States in the ſweeping deſpotiſm of France; no ſuch thing: he has left this country free to inveſtigate the conditions; and has only ſuggeſted that Union appears calculated to fortify, and give energy to that Empire, the ſtrength of which cannot be indifferent to Ireland, if what you ſay be true, viz. that it is engaged "in miraculous ſtruggles for the ſecurity, amongſt other things, of *Iriſh* liberties, laws, and Conſtitution."

You admit (p. 25) that Ireland ſhould contribute proportionably to Imperial expences ſo beneficially applied; and, in doing ſo, you *do* make that admiſſion, which in p. 27 you foreſee will be imputed to you; that *ſo far* as Union will throw this liability upon your country, it will not be inexpedient, or unjuſt. But you object to making a Britiſh Parliament appraiſers of this proportion; which you think would argue a ſilly, and exceſſive confidence

confidence in Britiſh generoſity:—Iriſh members would be but as one to five, &c. &c.

To this I anſwer, that imperial queſtions will, after Union, be referred, not to a Britiſh, but an Imperial Parliament: that if the incorporation be framed on right principles, it will conſolidate the intereſts, as well as Legiſlatures of the two countries; and render all complaints of the relative paucity of Iriſh Members as groundleſs as a like complaint would be from the inhabitants of Kent; and ſecondly, that the *preſent* relative extent of Iriſh contribution *may* be fixed by the articles of Union; and as Ireland will, I truſt, become ſo proſperous, as that the proportion ſtruck now, will hereafter be manifeſtly inadequate to her relative means, the ſame treaty might perhaps provide ſome juſt criterion of *future* Revenue adjuſtment; and guard againſt the riſque of referring it to the United Legiſlature, arbitrarily to encreaſe the degree of Iriſh liability.—"Hitherto," you inform us, (p. 25) that Ireland "has been unable to do more than maintain her "own eſtabliſhment, which has alone produced "a large debt." On reading this poſition, one is led to lament that the "foſtering care of our *domeſtic* Government" has not more effectually promoted our commercial proſperity; and to doubt the rectitude of the opinion which you advance, (p. 37,) that Ireland can derive no commercial

mercial advantage from an Union: at leaſt it ſeems to follow *from your ſtatement*, that ſhe has not much to loſe; and if it be obvious that ſhe muſt ſuffer, or at leaſt not gain commercially by an Union, it muſt be admitted that you ought to acquit Great Britain of the no-crime which you have imputed to her, of ſeeking an Union with financial views; ſince in order to take money out of the Iriſh purſe, ſhe muſt firſt put money into it: where there is no crop, there cannot be any tithe. In page 25, you ſuggeſt a mode, by which Ireland might "contribute to leſſen the load of debt which England *has* contracted." The ſecuring this contribution you, in the ſame page, ſuppoſe to be "the Miniſter's grand object in the Union;" and your expedient for accompliſhing it, is recommended on the authority of Mr. Adam Smith.

By way of anſwer, I ſhould *firſt* expreſs my doubt whether Government have any ſuch object as you attribute to them. In an "outline of the ſcheme of Union," as lately given in one of our public Prints, it is ſuppoſed to make a part of that ſcheme, that "Great Britain ſhall be reſponſible for her own debt, and its reduction."

Secondly, I would obſerve, that Mr. Smith, on whoſe authority you rely, is no foe to the principle of Union: he *approved* of the Scotch, and

recommended

recommended Iriſh Union; (Book 5th Ch. III.) and ſo far from regarding the Iriſh Channel as any impediment to political incorporation, his attachment to the principle overleaped the Atlantic, and led him to ſuggeſt Union between Britain and her American Colonies *(ibid.)* Therefore, when you were ſeeking *any* means rather than Union, for the attainment of an end, it was injudicious to refer to the authority of Adam Smith. Give me leave now, Sir, as I approach to my concluſion, rather *briefly* and curſorily, (yet I hope not ineffectually) to attempt refuting ſuch of your arguments as remain unnoticed. In page 14 you cite, with mighty triumph, the Chancellor's poſition, that "the Parliament of Ireland was alone competent to the affairs of Ireland." Permit me to check your pride of quotation, by whiſpering in your ear that, after an Union, the Imperial Legiſlature will be the Parliament of Ireland, (aye and of Wales, and Scotland, and Yorkſhire, and the Iſle of Wight,) and therefore may, conſiſtently with the doctrines of my Lord Chancellor, (to which I heartily ſubſcribe,) be "*competent to the affairs of Ireland.*"

In page 43, you aſſert that different parts of Ireland, "Dublin, Cork, and Limerick, the South, the North, and the Weſt," are treated by the author of that pamphlet which you anſwer, "as if they were inſulated bodies." You muſt pardon

me if I differ from you altogether, and think that, on the contrary, in that pamphlet, the different parts of Ireland are treated as if they were, (which they are,) intimately connected. They are treated conformably to *your own* principle; (in the truth of which I fully acquiesce,) viz. that "it is impossible to propose any scheme of policy, affecting the welfare of one" part of Ireland "which will not," in some degree, "affect" the whole. Hence it follows, that in suggesting benefits, which might result to Cork, or Limerick, from an Union, your adversary did not address himself to the selfishness of those cities, but only implied, what you admit to be true, viz. that in promoting "the welfare of one part" of Ireland, an Union will, *pro tanto*, promote the welfare of the whole.

I admit with you, p. 44, (in truth the admission is involved in what I have just written,) that Dublin cannot "suffer an injury, which must not "be felt in every corner of the kingdom." But I encounter this assertion with another, viz. that Cork and Limerick cannot derive advantages, which will not be felt in every quarter of the kingdom.

What the question may be *to the inhabitants of Dublin* I do not know; (and I should rather hear their arguments upon it, than their resolutions; for

for as I am not by nature timid, reſolutions do not appal me :)—but I am certain that *to Ireland*, the queſtion is not what Dublin, taken apart, will loſe or gain; but what will be the average loſs or advantage to the whole kingdom? And therefore it is a concluſive argument to ſhew that for what is likely to be loſt in one quarter of the Country, an equivalent is likely to be acquired in another. Every gain to Cork or Limerick is, indirectly an acquiſition to Dublin; for it is an encreaſe of that national proſperity, which will nouriſh Dublin, as it circulates through Ireland.

But though this principle be ſufficiently obvious to *impartiality*, and common ſenſe, yet I doubt whether we ought to liſten, without ſcruple, to the proteſtations of Dublin againſt an Union. I doubt whether we ſhould not argue more judiciouſly with the jealouſies of the metropolis, by ſuggeſting that the loſs to Dublin will, if any thing, be little. It undoubtedly will loſe ſome of that wealth, and importance, which flow to it as the ſeat of a diſtinct Legiſlature. But it will ſhare, (and principally) in that general encreaſe of national proſperity, which the friends to Union hope will be the conſequence of the meaſure. It is, as you obſerve, (p. 43) "the key to the greater "part of Ireland; and, from the extenſion of "the Canals, muſt ever continue ſo." Allow me to add, that Union will leave it this advantage,

tage, this ſource of national pre-eminence, undiſturbed.

But beſides, let it be remembered that the terms of Union (at leaſt in detail) are yet undivulged: that part of the arrangement might be a facilitating this extenſion of the canals, an improving of the port, or holding out temptations to the merchant to make choice of it; or in ſhort, (not to indulge in mere conjecture as to the *means*,) is it not poſſible that, in adjuſting the terms of Union, *particular* and *direct* compenſation may be made to the Metropolis, for any detriment which ſhe might ſuſtain, independent of that *general* and *indirect* equivalent, which ſhe will find in the advancement of national proſperity?

It may, and will, (I think) be found policy in Adminiſtration thus to appeaſe the jealouſies of this City; but I am ſure it is liberal, and patriotic policy, to forget the particular intereſts of Dublin, except ſo far as they make a part of the general intereſts of Ireland. Yet, in the caſe of Scotland, you ſeem to me to view the metropolis, diſtinctly from the kingdom. I do not know how elſe to reconcile two paſſages, which I meet in pages 45 and 49 of your pamphlet. In the firſt of theſe, lamenting over Edinburgh, you ſtate it as a conſequence of the Union that "ſcarcely a ſingle "Lord has an houſe there." In the ſecond you ſay

ſay that "five inſtances cannot be adduced of "Scotchmen of rank, however powerful and "extended their Engliſh connexions, whoſe chief, "or at leaſt temporary, reſidence and moſt uſeful "expenditure is not in Scotland. It ſhould ſeem from this ſtatement that the Scotch have only changed their reſidence from one part of Scotland to others; and whether or not Edinburgh has been rendered deſolate by the Union, is a queſtion which the erection of *the new town* will anſwer. For my part, I doubt whether Noblemen, and great men, reſiding diſperſedly at their ſeats and amongſt their tenants, are not more uſeful to the kingdom which they inhabit, than when *collected* into a metropolis; I doubt whether landed proprietors, reſiding in a chief City, and not on their eſtates, are not a *ſpecies* of Abſentees. Be this however as it may, I at leaſt collect from your ſtatement, wherewithal to calm my terror at the proſpect, which you think an Union opens—of a great augmentation of our Abſentees. I do not think it likely to encreaſe them in any very great degree; but though it ſhould, (beſide that the terms of Union might, in the department of taxation, counteract this miſchief,) you have ſhewn me that an Iriſh "Abſentee may be only a political ſpeculator, who will in the end enrich, and adorn his native country.

Allow me to ſay, that when you give to Union the title of Revolution, you imply what I have never

never heard insinuated, that the Scotch Union was a Revolution: that when you call "the substitution of another Parliament in the room of the existing one," (which by the way is a very inaccurate description of the effect of Union,) a Revolution, you admit that a Reform of Parliament would be a Revolution: that when you talk of the *plain speaking* of those great men who flourished in 1688, you appear widely to mistake their political sentiments. They *did* "recur to refinement": they *refined*, when they founded themselves on James's ABDICATION; and their refinement arose from a reverence for that Constitution, with whose hereditary, and other principles, they meddled no farther than an imperious necessity compelled them to do. So far from asserting, with Price, a right "*to cashier their Governors, and chuse a Government for themselves*," or publishing with you, that they had "deposed King James, and substituted William in his stead," they on the contrary, veiled in mysterious, and laudable refinement, that degree of interference which they found it impossible to avoid.

And now, Sir, I have only to congratulate you on being a fraction of that *immense* superiority of Bar talent, eminence, and information, (p. 54.) as well as numbers, which in the Exhibition-Room condescended to issue a manifesto, that much simpler heads might have composed! It is amiable

to

to ſee great minds indulge in trifling relaxation: to ſee Swift writing Rebuſes, or Scipio and Lælius gathering pebbles on the ſea-ſhore! But indeed you are too ſevere on the Minority: had you contented yourſelf with ſaying, *Nos Numeri Sumus*, from the bottom of my heart, I ſhould have acquieſced in the truth of the aſſertion; but you ought to conſider that, though the 164th of your praiſe of the Majority which comes to your ſhare, be no greater than your modeſty is able to endure, yet I cannot aſſert the talent of the Minority without claiming a thirty-ſecond part of the applauſe I give; which is more even of "empty praiſe," than my weak ambition could digeſt. We may both however join to oppoſe a common enemy, and proteſt againſt that vile calumniator, who has dared to ſay of Lawyers, "that in all points out of their "own trade, theyare the moſt ignorant, and ſtupid "generation amongſt us."* From this character of the profeſſion, it is very ſuperfluous for me to tell you that I diſſent; but in truth, when I recollect the William-ſtreet Exhibition, I am tempted with the ſame author to ſay, that it is "a pity that "creatures endued with ſuch prodigious abilities, "as by the deſcription you give of them, (i. e. of "the Majority) theſe Lawyers muſt certainly be, "were not rather inſtructors of others in wiſdom "and knowledge,"† than in violence and raſhneſs.

I aſk

* Swift. † Ibid.

I aſk pa rdon for the unreaſonable length of this concluding letter; and though I have kept my word, in treating your arguments with freedom, can with truth ſubſcribe myſelf your's, with much reſpect and eſteem,

A BARRISTER.

FINIS.